

February 18, 2014

Testimony IN SUPPORT of HB5069 and SB32

To the distinguished members of the Labor Committee.

My name is Katherine Steinmetz. I am a trained medical assistant and work part time as a homecare worker, with a history of working in fast food and retail. As a PCA, I make under \$10 an hour, even though I have been doing this job since 2005. I rely on a small amount of money in food stamps. I live in West Haven, and it is all I can do to keep up with the cost of living.

In the past, I also have worked at McDonald's for 7 years, and Rite Aid for 8 years making minimum wage or close to it. Working at businesses like these is hard - the work is busy and the pay is so low. People say that these are entry level jobs - but after years and years of diligent work I was never presented with an opportunity to advance. Most of the people who work at stores like these are not on a career path to become a CEO or VP of the company; we're just providing the service work that the company depends on to do business.

You get treated so poorly working at these companies. I have a strong work ethic, many times I worked off the clock at both McDonald's and Rite Aid. I don't make enough money to give up my time for free. These companies make so much in profits every quarter, and still I have to rely on food stamps to get by? It's just not fair. I don't want to rely on programs like that, but I have to.

I need to make more money, plain and simple. I need more financial stability in my life, the kind that higher wages would provide. I am a reliable, hard worker. The minimum wage needs to be raised and large, profitable corporations like McDonald's and Rite Aid need to pay their workers enough to survive.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

Katherine Steinmetz
West Haven